BRPC Digital Resource Guide

The resources below seek to close the digital divide for Berkshire County residents. Resources span local to national, and most are free. In addition to those noted below, all libraries and many Councils on Aging offer free computer and internet access or run digital classes or one-on one or small group tech support.

Regional + State Resources: Organizations		
Resource	Audience	Description
Alliance for Digital Equity https://sites.google.com/view/alliancefordigitalequity/services	Towns/Cities, Healthcare Providers, Colleges/Schools, Libraries, Senior Centers, Social Service Agencies, Affordable Housing Agencies, Faith-Based Institutions	Offers digital equity services to nonprofit partners in Western Mass. including: § **Digital skills training** workshops and train-the-trainer options § **Devices** - laptops, Chromebooks, tablets § **Hotspots** - *coming soon* § **Digital Navigator Support** - *coming soon* Organizations can complete an online service request form at the provided link to seek support from services to devices through the Alliance based out of Bay State in Springfield.
Massachusetts Broadband Institute https://broadband.masstech.org/		The state's official broadband institute providing grants, programs, resources, and workshops serving those working toward digital equity, inclusion, and access.
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute (MLRI) https://www.mlri.org/		Contact Virginia Benzan @ vbenzan@mlri.org to join the MA Statewide Digital Equity Coalition. Stay apprised of policy, advocacy, conferences, and workshops for those interested in knowing how your town or social service organization can get involved in statewide efforts to close the digital divide.
Western Mass ACP Network https://bit.ly/3WtPgxO		Resources to help towns, organizations, and individuals manage the end of the Affordable Connectivity Program and find lower-cost internet.

Assistive Technologies

Resource	Audience	Description
Mass. Rehabilitation Commission, Assistive Technologies https://www.mass.gov/mrc-assistive-technology-services	People with Disabilities and Their Families and Caregivers	Connects people with disabilities with the technology they need to live more independently.
United Cerebral Palsy of Western Mass https://ucpwma.org/		Offers free durable medical equipment, an assistive technology library, and a radio reading service through *Berkshire Talking Chronicle* over WRRS (104.3) to support children and adults with disabilities. They also offer Computer Fundamentals Webinars to teach beginning and advanced computer knowledge and skills.

Cybersecurity

Resource	Audience	Description
Mass CyberCenter https://masscybercenter.org/	Towns/Cities, Schools, Libraries, Senior Centers, Social Service Organizations, Affordable Housing Agencies, Faith-Based Institutions, Businesses	Enhances opportunities for the Mass. cybersecurity ecosystem to compete as a national leader and strengthens the resiliency of the Commonwealth's public and private communities. They host events during Cybersecurity Month in October and offer a calendar of events year-round.
Berkshire District Attorney's Office https://berkshiredistrictattorney.com/ technology-resources/		Offers online safety resources from a Cyber Tip Line to information for everyone from kids to older adults
Mass Attorney General: Computer and Online Privacy https://www.mass.gov/info-details/computer-and-online-privacy		Provides tips and insight into viruses, spyware, malware, and threats to computer systems, as well as phishing, hacking, and spam that can threaten personal identity and information.
Mass Attorney General: Cyber Crimes https://www.mass.gov/info-details/cyber-crimes		Offers tips to ensure people know what to look for and how to avoid cybercrimes.

Digital Equity: National

Resource	Audience	Description
Benton Institute https://www.benton.org/	Towns/Cities	Provides the only free, reliable, and non-partisan daily digest curating and distributing news related to universal broadband, connecting communications, democracy, and the public interest.
Institute for Local Self-Reliance https://ilsr.org/broadband/		Promotes locally rooted accountable broadband networks that provide fast, affordable, and reliable internet to all Americans. The Community Broadband Bits Podcast offers the latest inspirational stories from communities pursuing municipal broadband.
Education Superhighway https://www.educationsuper highway.org/	Towns/Cities, Schools, Social Service Organizations	Provides support and resources to expand broadband adoption nationwide. Foci include ACP wind down, free apartment Wi-Fi, adoption, and K-12 Bridge to Broadband.
EveryoneOn http://www.everyoneon.org/	Towns/Cities, Social Service Organizations, Schools, Libraries, Senior Centers, Affordable Housing Agencies, Faith-Based Institutions	Introductory digital inclusion workshops for nonprofits, K-12- serving organizations, public housing agencies, and others to introduce them to the digital divide and provide training to staff.
National Digital Inclusion Alliance https://www.digital inclusion.org/ https://www.digitalinclus ion.org/free-low-cost-internet-plans/		Advances digital equity and provides access to a free community of digital inclusion practitioners through calls and a monthly newsletter. Become an affiliate for free and join the third Friday of every month for Community Calls to hear about national resources and on-the-ground strategies for supporting digital inclusion.

Digital Skills: College Students + Adults

Resource	Audience	Description
Digital Learn https://training.digitallearn.org/	Adults	An online hub for digital literacy support and training from the Public Library Association. Includes self-directed tutorials for users to increase their digital literacy. Modules are video-based with narration and written in plain language at an elementary to middle school reading level for English and Spanish speakers.
GCF Global https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/		Free program that has helped millions learn the essential skills to live and work in the 21st century from MS Office and email to reading, math, and more. The site offers more than 300 topics, including more than 6,000 lessons, more than 2,000 videos, and more than 50 interactive exercises and games.
MA Adult Literacy Hotline 1-800-447-8844		Provides referrals to over 300 adult education programs that offer one- on-one tutoring, small-group, or classroom instruction to adult learners. They provide information about basic reading, math, English language learning, family literacy, and GED preparation.
Northstar via BRPC https://www.digitalliteracyassessment.org/launch-from/17204-Z3E9-berkshire-regional-planning-commission		Conduct a free self-guided digital skills assessment and take online classes using the link at left and entering BRPC's PIN: Z3E9. To arrange a group class with a BRPC tutor, including proctored assessments leading to certificates, email digital@berkshireplanning.org.

Tech Foundry – Tech Hub https://techhubmass.ticketleap.com/	Adults	Free Virtual and In-Person **Tech Literacy Classes** Empowering people with essential digital skills via a wide range of courses whether the person is starting out or looking to master advanced software. People can dive into topics from basic computer skills to sophisticated software usage. Students who complete six classes are eligible for a free device.
William Stickney Adult Learning Center https://www.pittsfield.net/en-US/a-adult-education-wspalc-35c392da		Part of the Pittsfield Public School system. The center offers access to the Northstar online digital learning and assessment platform as well as Adult Basic Education (ABE); GED: Adult Diploma Program; Pre-GED; English for Speakers of Other Languages; Basic Math; and Distance Learning. Available to those 16+; out of school; for ADP 18+.
Tech Goes Home https://www.techgoeshome.org/	Adults, Social Service Organizations	Empowers communities to access and use digital tools to overcome barriers and advance lives. Students who complete a 15-week training through a train-the-trainer model receive a free device and year of free internet with a hotspot. **For organizations**: sign up to explore a TGH partnership: https://www.techgoeshome.org/becoming-a-tgh-site.
Senior Planet - AARP https://seniorplanet.org/	Older Adults	Free online classes including digital skills aimed at older adults through American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). Older adults can speak to a technology trainer from 9:00 am – 8:00 pm EDT Monday to Friday by phone for free at 888- 713-3495.
Tech Boomers https://techboomers.com/		Free tutorials that teach users how to use the most popular and trusted websites and internet apps with over 60 courses packed with videos and articles tailored to those with limited computer skills. The site is written in easily understood, non-technical language.

Digital Skills: Youth

Resource	Audience	Description
aiEDU https://www.aiedu.org/	Schools	Creates equitable learning that excites and empowers students with AI literacy. A nonprofit that believes everyone—especially those likely to be disproportionately impacted by AI—have access to knowledge and skills to thrive as workers, creators, consumers, and citizens.
Code.org https://code.org/		Expands access to computer science in schools with a focus on increasing participation by young women and students from underrepresented groups.
DESE Digital Literacy and Computer Science Implementation https://www.doe.mass.edu/stem/dlcs/		Assists schools and districts analyze their digital literacy and computer science programming and design and implement a comprehensive program to prepare students for a career in the 21st century.
DLCS Parent and Guardian Resources https://www.doe.mass.edu/stem/dlcs/pg-resources.html	Schools, Parents	Supports parents around digital literacy and computer science with access to MassCORE and school report cards.
Girls Who Code https://girlswhocode.com/	Youth, Schools, After-School Programs	Works to close the gender gap in technology and change the image of what a programmer looks like and does.
Teens Teach Tech https://connectednation.org/programs/teens-teach-tech	Youth, Adults, Older Adults	Invites teachers, youth-focused organizations, and community nonprofits to offer workshops, mentorship, virtual sessions, and community events that cover digital skills from computer literacy to mobile devices and staying safe on the internet. Part of AT&T Connected Learning.

Free + Low-Cost Devices + Internet

Resource	Audience	Description
Alliance for Technology Refurbishing and Reuse / Digitunity https://digitunity.org/our-programs/aftrr/	Adults, Businesses, Social Service Organizations	**For individuals**: Donate a computer. **For corporations**: Donate a computer. **For nonprofits**: Get pre-qualified to receive a computer donation. Nationwide consortium of 90 nonprofit technology refurbishers supporting working groups, matching corporate donors with recipient refurbishers, sharing opportunities, and advocating for policies that advances device ownership.
Computers 4 People https://www.computers4people.org/	Social Service Organizations (with devices donated to individuals), Adults, Teens, Families	**Not yet in Berkshire County**, this nonprofit works to bridge the digital divide by repurposing e- waste into educational tools and ensuring equal access to technology. They provide free computers to individuals and nonprofits; free refurbished laptops to college-bound students in financial need; and PC Teen Building Classes and Digital Skills Classes for all ages.
Computdopt https://www.compudopt.org/	Adults, Teens, and Families	Refurbishes donated computers, operates a computer giveaway program, provides low-cost internet, and offers free tech education to youth and adults.
PCs 4 People https://www.pcsforpeople.org/	Low- and Moderate-Income Adults, Teens, and Families	Connects people with low-cost computers and internet services and recycles and refurbishes computers.
Tech Soup Refurbished Computers for Nonprofits https://www.techsoup.org/refurbished-computers	Social Service Agencies, Affordable Housing Agencies, Faith-Based Organizations	Provides nonprofits with discounted deals on devices and technology.

Small Business + Workforce Development

Resource	Audience	Description
BreakThrough Tech https://www.breakthrough tech.org/	College Students, Tech Businesses, Colleges	Break Through Tech is an organization focused on increasing the number of women and non-binary students graduating with degrees in computer science and related tech disciplines, and to serve as a role model for cities around the nation. They offer a one-year virtual and in-person AI program and a shorter Sprintership. Students can apply to join both programs. **Businesses and colleges can sign-up to become partners and hosts.**
Fiber Broadband Association OpTIC Path https://fiberbroadband.org/e ducation-and-certification/fba-optic-path/	Adults	Provides future technicians with knowledge and skills while opening the door for a career with organizations such as telecom. and internet service providers and contractors.
Mass CyberCenter Jobs Board https://jobs.masscyber center.org/companies		They host a Cybersecurity Jobs Board highlighting employment and internships in the Commonwealth and remote positions with Mass companies.
Opportunity: LinkedIn http://www.opportunity. linkedin.com/		Free learning paths mapped to in-demand jobs, discounted Microsoft certifications to validate skills, and best practices for job searching and interview prepping, so people can put their best foot forward.
Tech Foundry https://thetechfoundry.org/		An 18-week program to prepare people for IT careers. The program combines technical skills, professional development, and career readiness supported by experienced and committed Tech Foundry staff teaching in-demand technical skills through a mix of classes, projects and labs.
Mass Vets Advisor https://www.mass.gov/ collections/vets-advisor	Veterans	A website that enables veterans and their families to search for all the benefits they are entitled to in an easy one one-stop fashion.
Telecomm. Industry Apprenticeship Program https://www.tirap.org/		Offers former military professionals a structured pathway to earn income while learning the skills to pursue a meaningful career in the telecom sector.
Verizon Innovative Learning https://www.verizon.com/ learning/about	Adults, Small Businesses	Expands digital access support to small businesses to protect the climate and prepare people for jobs of the future.